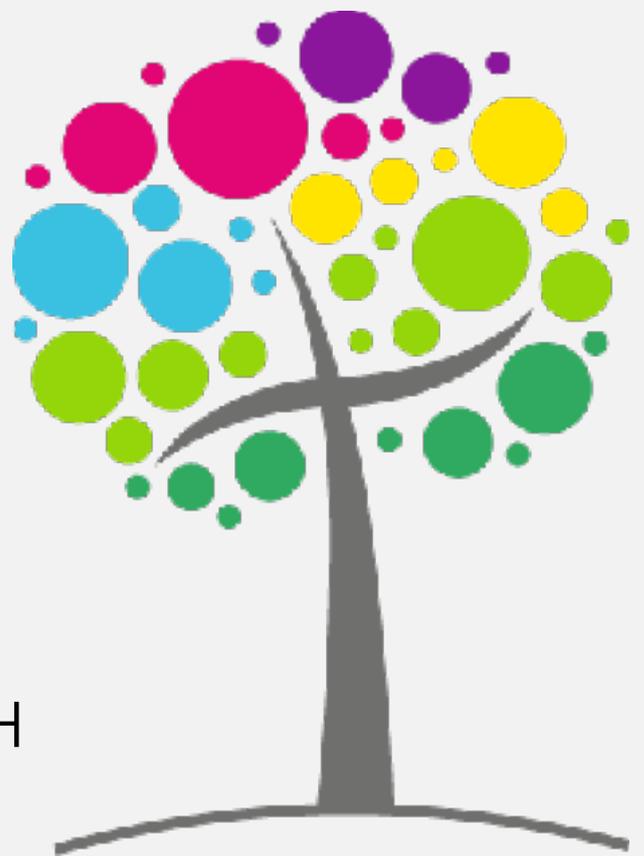




# ANNUAL REPORT 2018

PARK BAPTIST CHURCH



# MAXINE'S MEMO

*As she completes her final few weeks as Church Secretary, Maxine Corrigan reflects on the past year at Park...*



This year marks the completion of my term as Church Secretary after five years and a further year as a deacon. It has been an eventful five years, to say the least!

In that time we have said goodbye to Derrick Hill as he retired, searched for and found a new minister in Peter, while also seeing a change in Portuguese ministers, with Jorge replacing Leda Schofield.

The church has also changed in that time both in terms of personnel and in terms of the mission work we engage with. It is exciting to see how God has been active, and continues to lead us into new things at Park.

A significant change in my time as Secretary has been the increasing use of e-mail to communicate. This is a huge advantage nowadays; no more photocopying 30+ copies of minutes from church and trustee meetings, thank goodness. What a waste of paper!

As I look back upon this year it began with the usual demanding task of attending to the Home Mission Grant Application for 2019 and completing our Annual Report for 2017. Once these are completed and sent off it is always followed by a huge sigh of relief! Unfortunately Home Mission has been more complicated than usual this year, but the silver lining in our unsuccessful application will be its absence from my successors' in-tray!

I regularly meet with Peter to discuss ongoing issues at church and to prepare cover for his

annual leave. This allows me to contact a variety of visiting preachers to cover his absence. This year we were blessed with Richard Hughes, Ivan Pegg, Ron Skivington, Linda Turner and Derrick Hill, plus Jorge of course. Peter Lyle and I both covered other Sundays and Beth Powney came on Remembrance Sunday. Quite a variety of visitors in between Peter's regular programme!

The highlight of the year for me is always Baptisms. This year there have been seven; six from the Portuguese and one from the English congregations. It is exciting to see God at work in the lives of individuals, and I hope that as we seek to improve the ways we connect with our Portuguese family we will be able to share even more greatly in their joy when others are baptised.

Inevitably there are always changes in church membership, and alongside the new members we have had some also leave for differing reasons and of course we said goodbye to Lea after her passing in the summer. At the time of writing there are 52 English and 22 Portuguese members - 74 in total - this is the highest I personally have known here at Park.

Looking forwards this is a hugely exciting time as we begin the search for a new church building, and I can't help but feel we are at the beginning of a new chapter at Park. I look forward to seeing what the Lord brings in 2019 (without the task of minuting it all!)

*Maxine Corrigan*

# PASTOR'S REPORT

As a coastal town the sea forms a literal backdrop to our daily lives, and upon reflecting on my fourth year of ministry here at Park, I am mindful that the rhythms of church life are like the waves.

When we look out across the dunes on a sunny day and see still waters we feel tranquility. On a stormy day the crashing of the waves can mirror the drama of our own lives. Likewise, there exists a rhythmic ebb and flow that underpins the 'feel' of church at any given time. Sometimes things seem peaceful, at other times change brings tension and occasional conflict. This year feels like a time when the winds have picked up and while the sun still shines, it might be a good idea to have a warm jumper at the ready.

The biggest development of course has been the recognition by the church that we need to seek alternative premises. There is arguably no bigger change a church can go through than the moving of buildings, and it can be a time of 'choppy waters'. It is reassuring therefore, to be reminded that Jesus found the peace to sleep on a boat, even while a storm was raging, before bringing calm to the waters around him.

I have been encouraged this year by the growing sense of church as family. Feedback from several newcomers expressed their encouragement at the warmth shown to them at Park. We also continue to explore ways of bringing the two congregations closer together, introducing joint monthly prayer meetings and with social events like the summer BBQ.

Of course there are still areas that we can and must improve upon. The issue of membership and what it means needs prayerfully reviewing. How we encourage and help newcomers transition from 'occasional visitor' to part of the church family also needs reflection. Thankfully we do not operate in our own strength, but through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. As long as we continue to humble ourselves before God, we can be confident that Jesus will harness the winds and enable us to sail safely onwards together.

*Peter Timothy*



# MINISTRIES

*We continue to see God at work in a multitude of ways at Park. From the art and craft group, to cooking with teenagers and serving the homeless; Jesus can be found ministering to those on the margins, and it is exciting to be joining him in that work.*

## ART & CRAFTS DROP-IN

This group started as an art group, but it has evolved this year into something more. Arts and craft continue to be the main activities but we are finding many people simply want to drop-in and have a cup of tea and a chat. Some find it easier to talk when they are doing something like colouring or painting, and we've found it's been popular with newcomers to church. It remains an ideal place for the lonely, the vulnerable and adults with learning difficulties to attend. We are encouraging our CAP clients to come along, and have created invitation cards for it with the details and times of our Sunday service also included, plus a map signposting the church on the back. We meet on Mondays, 2.30-4.30pm.

*Pat Hillier*

## EAT, TALK, PRAY

Our after school cooking club has continued to be a popular and useful resource for young people. In the first part of the year we had up to nine young people attending each Tuesday, which forced us to relocate from The Hub to church, where we have extra oven space and more preparation areas.

The aim remains equipping youngsters with basic cookery skills and a folder of recipes that are both nutritious and cost effective. While we cook there are also amazing opportunities for conversations, where the young people often open up and share what's going on in their lives.

*Peter Timothy, Claire Timothy, Lester Jackson, Lorraine Lythaby*

## JUNIOR CHURCH

Junior Church runs each week for children of all ages. Over the past year we have had children who regularly attend as well as several new children who have come intermittently. We currently use the Mosaic resource books to ensure a consistent theme each month. We engage the children in drama, art and craft activities as well as games and stories. We aim to give the children something to take away with them each week. It is a great feeling when it works well! You can see the children growing in their understanding and they are very supportive of each other.

We have a wide age range and we are in need of both leaders and helpers to join us in the New Year. If it something you think you may be interested in speak to Denise, Michelle, Su, Angie or Lessie and come and spend time with the group.

*Denise Jackson, Michelle Bullock, Su Robinson, Lessie Keenan, Angie Wright*

## THE LIVING ROOM

Our winter night shelter for the homeless was busy last year, with over 30 different visitors from December through to the end of March. We decided to host a Sunday evening hot meal for the homeless throughout the summer months as a way of keeping in contact with them and to continue to provide support. Our co-ordinator, Jo Morrison, does an excellent job, supported by a team of volunteers. We were saddened to learn of the death of one of our visitors, Andy, in November, and have a short service planned for him at Park later in the month. We are still in need of volunteers for this winter, plus a rota of willing cooks to make a two-course meal on a Sunday evening.

*Peter Timothy, Nick Symeou, Lester Jackson, Peter Chapman*

## MEN'S GROUP

At Park we believe that it is important for men to meet together socially so that we might in turn support each other spiritually. Consequently, all the events we organise revolve around food!

In February about 16 of us enjoyed a delicious cooked breakfast at the Seahorse Guest House and were able to enjoy relaxing and chatting together afterwards. Thanks to Phil and Sandra Grey for their hospitality.



hospitality.

Nearly all of the men like curries, so once again we headed off to a local Indian restaurant for a meal. This year we chose Jaipur Restaurant on King Street. It was interesting to share our stories with each other and catch up on each others' news.

Our main event this year was when eight of us went on a 'glamping' weekend in Sustead, near Cromer, in August. It began with a homemade Cream Tea served upon arrival and involved plenty of burgers, chicken and of course sausages rustled up on the barbecue. On Friday evening we had a time of fellowship, prayer and worship. We discussed how as Christian men we could be more effective in our community. In the morning we did a five mile walk to Cromer. It was an opportunity to get to know each other better as we walked. After more food (fish and chips!)



and a swim (for some), we walked back through the beautiful countryside to camp. The spiritual highlight of the weekend took place on Saturday evening when we found an empty old Anglican church near the camp site. We stayed for over an hour singing, praying, listening and connecting with God. The weekend finished on Sunday with a communion service and then a pub lunch at the Wayford Bridge Inn.

In September I hosted a BBQ to reflect upon the weekend away and to think about what events we could organise for 2019. At the top of the list is probably the need for a diet before we meet up again in the New Year!

*Nick Symeou*

## PRAYER TRIPLETS

Earlier this year we introduced prayer triplets in church. This involved joining with two others to meet regularly to pray together. The idea is to try and develop the support networks in church and to improve our own prayer lives. So far over 50 people have joined a triplet. Here is the story of one groups...

*"Our prayer triplet has only managed to physically meet three times, but we are in regular contact via WhatsApp. It's great to know that I am being supported in prayer and that I am also able to intercede for my two sisters. We have already become closer and I can see that over time we will become closer still. We all have full-time jobs, so getting together can be a struggle, but if we can keep meeting regularly I can only see positive outcomes!"*

*Peter Timothy*

## SOUL SISTERS

We have named ourselves after an article by Julia Bettencourt. Each letter stands for a quality that Christian sisters share in their walk together:

**Silly** - those that bring laughter and humour to our lives.

**Inspiring** - in what they say or do.

**Strong** - in the face of trials and struggles.

**Talkative** - the importance of communication and sharing our joys and struggles.

**Encouraging** - those who cheer us up, give a pep talk.

**Real** - friends to keep you grounded.

**Saved** - we all share our love of the Lord.

We have enjoyed a varied programme this year. January started with a bring-and-share lunch to discuss and plan future activities for the group. We ran a Flipping Marvellous Pancake fundraising evening for CAP in February and in March we celebrated Women's World Day of Prayer by making a model of a broken heart from rubbish to remind everyone to look after our local town.

We paired up in May in order to find out more about each other and in June we enjoyed a fabulous High Tea at the Star Hotel. As autumn and winter approach, we will be planning the church Christmas party and packing and delivering Christmas hampers to our CAP clients and their families.

*Denise Jackson & Sandra Grey*



# PASTORAL CARE

*And let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers'*

*Galatians 6:9*

The pastoral care of the church covers all those involved and connected to Park. It begins with how we treat, support and love each other, with the first point of call usually a person's house group, and then the pastoral care team. Peter and Jorge work alongside this providing support and care as required.

One of the key roles of the Pastoral Care Team is to ensure that people do not fall through the net, particularly for those who are not attending a house group, or when extra support is needed above and beyond that which a house group might be able to provide.

We are grateful to June and Robin Day, who have stepped down due to health issues, after many years of faithful service and support of others. They continue to support individuals in church through phone contact and with their words of wisdom!

The team now consists of Val Bayliss, Lester Jackson, Megan Mynhardt, Kim Symeou and Peter Timothy. Our support varies, from visits to people in their home, in hospital, in residential care and in prison, through to liaisons with social and care workers, accompanying people to appointments. Support and encouragement is also provided through the likes of phone calls, cards, flowers and from our benevolent fund.

## **Encouragements and Challenges**

We are encouraged when God uses us to make a difference in someone's life, however small. We have also been encouraged by the way that the church as a whole has rallied to provide transport, meals etc on a short term basis for people struggling with serious issues.

However, our main challenge is how do we adequately meet the needs of those in our church who have chronic ongoing issues, some needing regular support / visits for the long term. This is a load that needs to be shared, so if anyone feels able to give an hour once per week to visiting someone, please speak to Kim to find out what it might involve.

We all need to care for one another, so a big thank you to our wonderful pastoral care team and all those at Park who make it their priority to get alongside those who are hurting. We meet several times a year as a team to review the needs of the church and to pray for our church family. In March we enjoyed a meal out together at Wetherspoons, which was a good chance to meet socially, to eat, chat and laugh together - a bit of light relief from the heavier issues usually discussed at our meetings!

*Kim Symeou*

# CAP

As we come to the end of our second year supporting people in unmanageable debt, we are finding our feet in terms of how we operate and developing our support framework.

We've not seen so many clients come to church this year, but there have been surprising conversations in people's homes. There is a desire to engage both with Jesus and his church and God is slowly changing hearts. Many of our new clients have young families, so we will need to think about how our social activities can be accessible to this demographic.

Two clients have become debt free this year via a Debt Relief Order, with a third client on course to be debt free by the end of the year from paying their debts back in monthly payments.

We were encouraged by the visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, in November, when he visited Park to meet Pat and one of our clients. He was both encouraging and inspired by Jamie's story.

We are working to build partnerships with a special focus on churches in Gorleston, and have already received support from Cliff Park Community Church, with the hope for formal partnerships in 2019.

## POINTS FOR PRAYER

- Thank God for his marvellous provision this year. We have been grateful for two donations totalling £3,600 - which exceeds our year two fundraising target.
- Thank God for the growing interest from churches in Gorleston, and pray for this to develop into formal partnerships, with new befrienders and additional financial and prayer support.
- Pray for our clients as they continue to pay into their plans and adjust to living on a budget.
- Pray for more befrienders and opportunities to invite clients to church and church events.



# HOUSE GROUPS

*Our house groups meet across Great Yarmouth and the northern villages, on various weekday evenings. We also have a day time group on Friday afternoons and usually study in tandem with the Sunday sermon series. This year we have focused on Acts and Mark's Gospel. As well as Bible study, house groups are a place for prayer, pastoral support and socialising. They are a core feature of church life together.*



We've had a good year! We still start the evening with a meal, learning a lot of what people like to eat, but perhaps more importantly talking together and hearing how they have experienced God in their lives.

Some have heard God speaking directly to them, others have felt his spiritual presence. We take turns to lead the study, which has been really interesting. As a group some of us still need more confidence to pray together but we're improving!



We meet on Wednesdays and although it can be difficult to meet every fortnight we have managed to keep meeting regularly.

This year we were pleased to welcome Jay and Sharmila into the group and have enjoyed getting to know each other more. We are developing a deeper understanding of the Bible together and have supported each other through difficult times.

Each person contributes and is able to voice their opinion. We often have more questions than answers!



We meet alternate Mondays at Pat's. The average attendance is eight plus a further three who attend when able. We start with a drink, cake and a chat while we wait for others who work to arrive. Then we have a time of Bible study, which often brings up life circumstances to discuss. We finish the evening with a time of prayer and have also shared communion on occasion

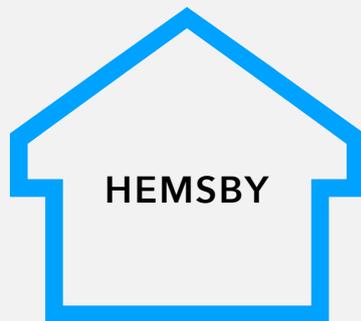
This year we met through the summer for the first time. The most pleasing thing is how we are there for each other in the time between meeting and the trust built between us.

# HOUSE GROUPS (CONTINUED)



We feel this is a special group because there is such a great level of openness and honesty among the members. They are very supportive and caring, and we were delighted to see Sue baptised earlier this year. Dirk has also been challenged to commit to one church, and is now regularly attending Kingsgate. Sharon and Jamie have joined us this year and are most welcome.

We have been using the NOOMA videos by Rob Bell, which relate to things that are happening in our lives and shows us how to go to the bible to find the answers. We open each meeting with 30 minutes of prayer; thanksgiving, sharing answers and offering petitions and it is a special time each week.



We are a small group that usually meets fortnightly on a Thursday evening. We enjoy stimulating Bible studies and discussions on a range of topics.

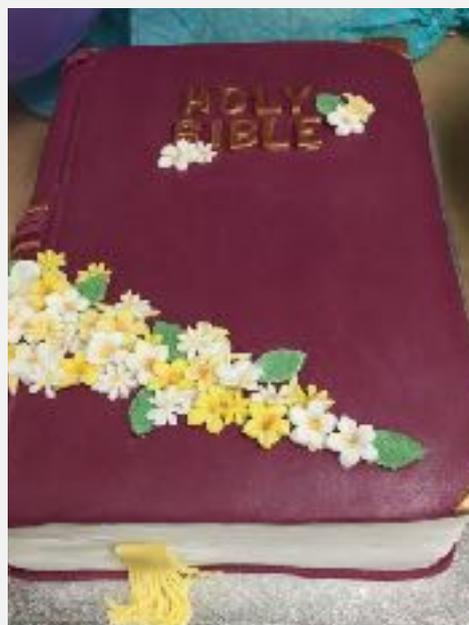
This year we have largely mirrored the Sunday sermon series by exploring the epistle of James and the Tom Wright study guide on Acts.

We would welcome any newcomers who would like to join us.



Ormesby house group have met together fairly regularly at Su or Claire's home on a Thursday evening. Nigel and Sheila usually join us and we enjoy an evening of discussion on the given Bible passage, prayer and sharing what's going on in our lives, so we can better support each other.

We represent a range of ages and life experiences and feel able to be open about what we think on a variety of often controversial issues facing the church. We are currently supporting Sheila following her recent stroke and praying for her recovery.





# PRAYER

The prayer ministry of the Church is made up of Thursday nights, prayer triplets (see separate report), open prayer on Sundays and joint prayer meetings between the two congregations.

Every Thursday we meet at 7.30pm, and on alternate weeks we also have a time of intercessory prayer from 6pm. Around four are usually present for this, with 8-14 at the 7.30 meeting. This replaced the 8am Saturday prayer slot, and has proven to be more popular, although we would love to see more people join us.

The Lord continues to meet us in exciting ways during these times, often moving us in directions we didn't foresee! This seems especially so on the weeks of intercessory prayer beforehand. Sunday prayer is expressed in different ways but the time of prayer before the service has dropped off. This is a concern which needs addressing in the next year. In the autumn we began joint prayer meetings, which are an exciting development, and have given us glimpses of the Lord's plan for our future. A highlight was the Monday before Sandra's operation, when a group prayed for the whole family. The sense of the Lord's compassion was tangible and praise God the outcome was to His Glory.

*Nigel Parrott*

# OUR VISION, PURPOSE & VALUES

## PARK PURPOSE

Our purpose explains *why* we exist as a church:

- **To express our love for God together**
- **Help each other as a church family to become more like Jesus**
- **Share God's love with our community**

## PARK VISION

Our vision outlines *where* we believe God is leading us. Our vision is to be:

**A praying community which wholeheartedly**

- **Loves God**
- **Loves Each Other**
- **Loves Great Yarmouth**

## PARK VALUES

Our values outline *who* we believe God is calling us to be. We are committed to making Park Baptist Church a place where:

- **We will always serve God joyfully**
- **We will always put Jesus above ourselves**
- **We will always put people above task**
- **We will always include everyone**
- **We will always speak the truth in love**